

Editorial

Meeting Report: STAT-HAWKERS at the JSM-2014, Boston, USA

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In this Editorial, we recall memories and share photographs from the booth STAT-HAWKERS at the Joint Statistical Meeting (JSM) 2014, held in Boston, USA, August 2–7, 2014.



Fig. 1. Cheon-Sig Lee, Oluseun Odumade and Sarjinder Singh.

Cheon-Sig Lee, Oluseun Odumade and Sarjinder Singh setup the booth on August 2 and 3. Figure 1 shows front side of the booth and a tall tower. It was a challenge to fix the tower, which was 10 feet high. It was also decorated by blinking LED lights. The booth was decorated by two banners from the front and right sides showing the flyer “Thinking Statistically: Elephants Go to School” and the image of a T-shirt which was especially designed this year to promote the journal, “Model Assisted Statistics and Applications.” LED lights were incorporated into the decoration around the booth. On August 3, four types of stuffed animals as well as supermen and spidermen were

displayed for the attending children. We also had flashing lights, goggles, scales, white boards, bouncing balls and pens to distribute as promotional materials.

Oluseun was very excited to distribute the promotional material very fast, although one professor, Stephen Sedory, in my department, suggested that we do not distribute everything in one day. Oluseun could not control his sentiments, and as per my nature, I did not stop him. Ultimately, Oluseun and Cheon distributed all 72 elephants, 50 horses, 50 monkeys, 50 spidermen, 50 supermen and 100 zebras.

A big poster advertising the journal *Model Assisted Statistics and Applications* with pictures of Stan Lipovetsky, Stephen Horn and Sarjinder Singh, was also displayed. This year Stan could not make it to attend the conference, but his picture was there. Another big poster of the same size advertising the monograph “Advanced Sampling Theory with Applications”, was also posted.

This year, the most attractive promotional materials were T-Shirts bearing the logo *Model Assisted Statistics and Applications* on the front, and at the back “Thinking Statistically: Elephants Go to School.” One of Oluseun’s friend Augustus Jayaraj from Cornell University also joined the booth and was involved in the activities. A total of 180 T-shirts were distributed, and out of these 60 T-shirts were for kids.



Fig. 2. Augustus Jayaraj, Sarjinder Singh, Oluseun Odumade, and Cheon-Sig Lee.

On August 4, Oluseun and Cheon purchased more toys from China Town, Boston, but these proved to still not be enough. In the evening of August 4, we asked Augustus to drive car for us to a party shop, so that the next day we had more promotional material at the booth. In addition, there was always some chocolate and candies for the booth visitors. The promotional material sent by IOS Press, The Netherlands, was also distributed, which included CDs, hard copies of the journals, sticky pads, etc. In a nutshell, we kept our booth busy for most of the time.

Later, I had a special encouraging e-mail from Judy-Anne Chapman, PhD, P.Stat., PStat¹ (ASA) praising the booth activities, in that this was the first time she knew of where a commercial group offered a benefit (free t-shirt) for overtly proclaiming to be accredited as an ASA PStat.

One of the major outcomes of the booth was that we had a great opportunity to have a picture taken with the 100th president of the American Statistical Association, Dr. Fritz Scheuren (Fig. 3). It was very nice to talk to him. The journal entitled *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, for which he is Editor-in-Chief, was also promoted at the booth.

Whatever we spent on the booth, it was returned back in one moment as soon as I saw Prof. James Alan Fox, from Northeastern University. He is the lead author of the pioneer monograph on randomized response sampling entitled, “Randomized Response: A Method for Sensitive Surveys” from SAGE Publications, published in 1986.

Figure 4 proves that five guys in the USA don’t only cook burgers; there is another group of five guys cooking randomized response models. We had the chance to chat about the future of randomized response techniques. He was so kind that he also attended both my joint presentations of the contributed papers by Cheon-Sig Lee and Augustus



Fig. 3. Dr. Fritz Scheuren, Cheon-Sig Lee and Sarjinder Singh.



Fig. 4. Oluseun Odumade, James Alan Fox, Sarjinder Singh, Cheon-Sig Lee and Augustus Jayaraj.

Jayaraj. We also showed Prof. Fox that we are collecting data utilizing the crossed model with two-decks of cards (Fig. 5).

Figure 5 shows a respondent participating in the survey while responding to a sensitive question after drawing a card from a deck of cards.

The year 2014 was very much the right time to meet Prof. Fox, because we have published the special issue “Celebrating The Golden Jubilee Year of The Warner’s Randomized Response Model”. The Guest Editor for the special issue is Prof. Arijit Chaudhuri (Applied Statistics Unit, Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata, India) who has published three monographs on this topic. His first monograph was published in 1988 jointly with Rahul Mukherjee, by Marcel Dekker. The second monograph was published in 2011 by Taylor & Francis, where he is the sole author. The third monograph was published in 2013 jointly with TC Christofides, by Springer. This year it was very fortunate to have all these experts around us while celebrating The Golden Jubilee Year 2015 of the Warner’s randomized response model, which he had published during 1965 in the *Journal of the American Statistical Association*. We will



Fig. 5. A respondent drawing a card from a deck of cards.

continue our discussion on this topic in a foreword in one of the forthcoming issues.

To close, Fig. 6 shows a little girl with pink glasses and a colorful ball who visited the Stat-Hawkers booth. These activities are remembered by the minds of kids, and should be done at a higher level so that kids can take interest in statistics conferences.



Fig. 6. Children at the booth, STAT-HAWKERS 2014.

I will be completely mistaken if I do not acknowledge the help from Paul and Rasjel, IOS Press, for the promotion of: *Model Assisted Statistics and Applications*, an international journal.

Thank you for your time and for reading my collections from the 2014 Joint Statistical Meeting.